



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

definition. And if we find in America some special glory and leading, even some tang of the air, that no other land could give, we may be sure that our nation, for all the races of our origin, will never become great on its cosmopolitan plan, unless we respect and nourish the culture and all the precious heritage of the centuries, developed by other countries at such heavy sacrifice and brought us, sometimes humbly and indirectly, by the millions of our immigrants.

President ANDERSON: The subject of libraries for rural communities has always interested the members of this Association, and we feel that we are this evening to have the subject elucidated from a new point of view which will be both helpful and instructive. The United States Commissioner of Education hardly needs a formal introduction to this body. However, it gives me great pleasure to present to you Dr. P. P. CLAXTON.

LIBRARIES FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES

The duties of the Bureau of Education and of the Commissioner of Education of the United States are to make such investigations and give such information to the people of the United States as will assist them in establishing and maintaining better schools and school systems, and otherwise to assist in promoting education among the people. The library and the librarian are helpful in both, and without the help of these neither can be done very successfully.

The school is not the only agency of education, nor is it the only agency supplementary to the home. In the United States children attend school on an average of 5,000 hours; children in country communities attend school probably about 4,000 hours. Between birth and the age of 21 there are 184,000 and some odd hours in the life of a child. If children sleep an average of 10 hours a day, probably enough, approximately 109,000 waking hours remain between birth and 21,

5,000 hours in school (for country children 4,000 hours), and more than 100,000 waking hours out of school, less than 5 per cent of the conscious waking life of the child in school. If we represent the life of the child from birth to 21 by an oblong surface of 184 units, 109 of these units then represent the conscious waking life of the child and 5 of the units represent the school life of the average American child. Four of the units represent the school life of the average country child. This helps us to realize the very small part which school life is of the total life of the child. The child in the city of Washington who attends school every hour that school is in session is in school only 900 hours in the year. There are 8,760 hours in the year; the children of Washington who attend regularly and promptly are in school 900 hours and out of school 7,860 hours; 8,760 and 7,860 sound so nearly alike that one can hardly tell the difference.

Only a small part of the education of any individual is obtained in school. The home was the primitive institution of education; then came the church, the school, and the other supplementary agencies, among them the library. The teacher in the school deals with a small group of subjects in a narrow and formal way. According to the American method lessons are learned and said from textbooks, and textbooks are not books in the best sense.

Neither is the teacher in the school a teacher in the highest and best sense. All teachers may be divided into two classes. This division into two classes may indeed be made in several ways. First, there are teachers made of clay, and teachers who have had the breath of life breathed into them. Every superintendent of schools knows teachers of both classes. In one room he finds a teacher made of clay, whom he goes up against with a dull thud and who sticks worse than Uncle Remus's Tar-Baby. In another room he finds a teacher whose soul is on fire. She has had the breath of life breathed into her. Instead of the thud, there is resilience. But there

is a more important division still. This division is into first-hand teachers and second-hand teachers. The first-hand teachers are those whom I like to call the kings and priests to God and humanity. They are those who out of the exhaustless quarry of the unknown bring to the surface and give definite shape to some new block; those who listen to and interpret the still small voices; those who gain at first hand a clearer vision and stronger grasp of the eternal verities than most of us are capable of; those who stand on the mountain tops and catch the glow of the ever-dawning new day; those who, a little more finely organized than most of us, are able to feel the heart-throb and pulse-beat of the world and of humanity; those clear-sighted individuals who can see a little deeper into nature and human life than the rest of us and who by directing our gaze teach us to see more than we otherwise would; those who serve as the mouthpieces for civilizations, races, and nationalities. You have heard of the man who said he liked to talk to himself for two good reasons; first he liked to hear a wise man talk, and second he liked to talk to a wise man; both conditions were fulfilled when he held converse with himself. The world is much like this man. It has little time to listen to you or to me, or to most of us, but occasionally this wise old world has something to say and is filled with the desire to reveal itself to itself, and then it chooses as its spokesman a man of the kind I have described, an original teacher, a first-hand teacher. It may be a Homer, voicing all the best of the civilization and philosophy, the art and the idealism of the Greeks before they were fully developed and before the Greeks themselves had become generally conscious of themselves; or it may be a Dante, voice of fourteen dumb centuries; or a Shakespeare, revealing Europe to itself; or a Goethe, by divine right poet of the universe and prophet of the ages that are to come; or it may be one of smaller caliber, but of the same race with these. Men like these the world

chooses when it has something worth while to say, and then it is willing to stop and listen. These men have usually obeyed, in some degree at least, the injunction of Carlyle, and in God's name have expressed whatever thought or infinitesimal part of a thought they have had to express. Those who have had anything to say have said it and recorded it in some more or less permanent form. Through the ages the sifting process goes on, the wheat is sifted from the chaff, and the chaff is burned with fire unquenchable. This sifted grain, these treasured records in books, form the real wealth of the world, and it is in the keeping of the libraries and librarians.

We school-teachers belong to the class of second-hand teachers. We have little of our own to teach. We are not the discoverers of new truth. We bring up little or nothing from the great quarry of the unknown. We seldom even give definite form to any unhewn block. We do not push back the walls of cosmic darkness. We gain little new insight into life and nature. The still small voices make few original revelations of the eternal verities through us. The world does not hold communion with itself through us. We do not stand at the altars of life and nature as kings and priests to God and humanity. Even if for a moment we stand on the mountain tops, we do not catch the springing light of the new day, but the fading light of the day that is gone. We are peddlers, purveyors of knowledge, distributing to those who are willing to buy, and trying to persuade, cajole, or force those who will not. The school-teacher can therefore do nothing better than to introduce children to the first-hand teachers, the teachers of the world to whom we all go to school, so that when school days are over—all too early for most children—they may continue under the tuition of these first-hand teachers in the larger school of life.

The best work school-teachers can do, therefore, is not in putting children

through the courses in arithmetic, geography, history, or any of the textbooks, but in introducing them to good books and helping them to acquire a taste for good literature and to form the habit of reading that which is most worth while. Boys and girls leaving school at fifteen may soon forget most of the lessons and subjects learned in school, but, if having learned to love good books and to hunger and thirst for them, and having gained the right habits of reading them, they continue to read at the rate of one-half dozen good books a year, they will by the time they are men and women forty years old have read not less than 150 good books. One who has with open mind read with appreciation 150 good books can hardly be ignorant and boorish or uneducated. The windows of his soul will be open to all the winds that blow. He will welcome the light from whatever source. To such individuals or to a community of such individuals one may appeal with the hope of generous response for whatever may be for their own good or for the good of the state, the nation, or the world.

But the love of books and the habit of reading formed in school demand the public library; therefore one of the most important educational movements of the last quarter of a century has been the development of the public library. It is just twenty-five years since the opening of the first Carnegie library, and library development has been greater in this country within this time than in all the years before. You know what the library was a quarter of a century ago. In most cities and towns, except the largest, if there were libraries at all, they were supported by the subscription fees of those who used them, or they belonged to clubs of some kind. Librarians were only curators of books, their chief duty to guard their books against loss and against the wear of use. Public libraries supported by adequate endowments or by public taxation, and open for the use of the people, were few. Library buildings were seen in only a few cities. These twenty-five years have seen the club

and society libraries under the watchful and jealous guardianship of their curators give place to the public libraries administered by their corps of expert librarians, whose highest duty it is to foster and extend intelligent use of the books in their libraries. Most cities of 25,000 inhabitants or more, and many that are smaller, now have public libraries, many of them housed in buildings like unto kings' palaces. Probably most of these bear somewhere a legend which reminds one that Mr. Carnegie, who I think may very properly be called the lord of the library, contributed to their erection. But many such buildings have been paid for out of funds donated by men and women less well-known, and some have been paid for out of funds derived from public taxation, from which last source comes the fund for the up-keep of nearly all. There are librarians here tonight who have served in one place twenty-five years. Within these years the work of the librarian has become a profession. The science and art of it are now taught in school and college.

Hundreds of millions of dollars have gone into library buildings. Tens of millions of dollars are given annually for the support of libraries. Something has been done for school libraries in several of the states, but with it all, two-thirds of the people of the United States are still without access to any adequate collection of books. In 2,200 counties there is no library that has as many as 5,000 books. This means what? It means that people of many suburban communities, of most small towns, of almost all villages, and 90 per cent or more of the people living in the open country have no access to any adequate collection of books. The time has come for a careful inventory of what has been done and of the much larger work that remains to be done, then to plan for this larger work, which must not be longer postponed. Without unnecessary delay we must provide books and all of the expert help of a trained librarian for all the people of all

the states and territories and possessions of the United States, whether they live in city, town, village, or open country.

If time permitted I would like to say a few words in emphasis of the importance of providing books for people living in the open country and villages under rural conditions. For many reasons these people have more time for reading than city people, and will read the best books, of the best type, with more appreciation and profit. They read less for time-killing or mere entertainment, and more for information and inspiration. Their close and familiar contact with nature and the simple fundamental things of life gives them greater power of interpretation for the great literature of nature and life than city-bred people are like to have, and their time for reading comes in larger sections and with less interruption. I have been a country boy myself and have lived in the backwoods, three miles from the cross-roads store and the blacksmith shop. I know the long rainy Sundays, the long succession of rainy days during the wet spells of the crop-growing season, the long snowy days of winter, and the long winter evenings with nowhere to go less than a dozen miles away, and the shut-in feeling. Under such circumstances a book becomes a close companion, closer than in the city, where one must hold the attention against a thousand tempting distractions.

It is also true that the laboring people in the cities may obtain comparatively larger results from the use of the public library than do the people of the wealthier classes, who have more leisure and more of what we call education. Dr. Davidson of Columbia University found this to be true of his evening classes in philosophy on the east side in New York. Those who have spoken to audiences in Cooper Union and other similar places have had an opportunity to see something of the intelligence of these people and the eagerness with which they discuss most important questions.

To understand literature, which is the expression of life, one must have rich and varied life experiences. Such experiences at first hand people in the streets and those employed in the industries have. These people deal with the great forces of nature. They know at first hand the bare facts and the seamy sides of trade, of life, and of the democratic society of the multitude. People who live in the country under free skies; who roam the forests; who swim the streams, or wander up and down their banks; who know the sea-shore; who work in the fields, tilling the soil, sowing, cultivating, and harvesting the various crops; who deal with animals and know their habits; who are familiar with the phenomena of nature and of life, and who must work in harmony with the laws of nature and life or die, gain experiences that enable them to interpret the great fundamental literature of the world better than those who have not had such experiences.

How may we bring books to these people of the suburban communities, small towns, villages, and the open country? The following plan is, I believe, entirely practicable, and through it we may in ten or fifteen years accomplish this task fully. Every city library should at once be open not only to the people living within the corporate limits of the city, but to all the people of the suburbs and of the country districts of the county in which the city is located. If there be more than one city having a library in a county, the proper division of country districts can easily be made. Branch libraries should be established in the smaller towns and villages and at the more important cross-roads places, and the schools made to serve as distributing centers. In addition to funds for up-keep from endowment and from moneys collected by city taxation, there should be taxes for this purpose levied on all the property of the county. To bring about such an arrangement ought not to be difficult. The people of the city should welcome the increase of funds made possible by county taxes. The

people of the country should be glad to get the use of the larger collections of books in the cities, much larger than they would be able to obtain for themselves, except at the cost of very burdensome taxation. In this way the opportunities of the public library might be extended to all the people of 800 counties or more.

In the remaining 2,200 counties we should establish central libraries at the county seat, where the county courthouse is, where the roads converge—trolley lines sometimes, railroads frequently, country roads always—and to which the people come to transact their legal business and to trade. This central library should be housed in a suitable building, of a good style of architecture, and should of course have a staff of expert librarians. There are few counties in the United States in which there are not several men and women of wealth sufficient to enable any one of them to give twenty, thirty, forty or fifty thousand dollars—as much as may be needed—for a central library building. Many poor rural counties have sons who live and have grown rich elsewhere, and who in their old age find their minds reverting to the days and scenes of their childhood. These might easily be induced to send some of their money after their thoughts and affections, and thus bring richer opportunities to their relatives and childhood friends and to the children of these and their children's children for many generations. We all know of instances in which something like this has been done. Mr. Groves, of chill-tonic fame, now living in St. Louis, was born in a country community in a rural Tennessee county. Within a few years he has given a quarter of a million dollars for a county high school in that county. He paid for a large, beautiful site and gave an endowment sufficient to enable the county with reasonable taxation to make a school of the best type. A splendid building was erected at the cost of the county, including the town at the county seat, on the borders of which the school is located. The county levies a tax to

supplement the income from the endowment. This man could no doubt be persuaded to give money in a similar way for a library for the county. A dozen years ago Mr. Sanford Brumback, a banker and business man living in the town of Van Wert, in Van Wert county, Ohio, gave a sum of money which after his death his children increased to \$50,000, to be used in erecting a public library building for the county. The city gave the site in one of its beautiful wooded parks. The building was erected. The library association in the town gave its collection of books. The county levied a tax, which amounts to something like \$7,500 a year, for the purchase of new books, to pay its librarians, and for general up-keep. The county now has a good library, large enough for the needs of the people of the city and county alike. Nearly twenty branches are maintained in different parts of the county and most of the public schools of the county serve as distributing and collecting points. Every boy and girl, every man and woman in the county thus has access to a good collection of books. In this way or otherwise seventy or more counties in the United States now supply books to all their people. In some cases the buildings have been erected at public expense. I think it probable that Mr. Carnegie, who has given so generously for city and college libraries, would give just as liberally for county libraries, to be established and maintained in the way I have suggested.

I am so much interested in this that I have made it a part of the work of the Bureau of Education's specialists in rural education to study the problem and to make sentiment for the libraries wherever they may go. I hope the time may soon come when the Bureau may have a group of able men and women who can give all of their time to this work. It is impossible to estimate the good that would come from having central libraries at the county seats and branch libraries in the smaller towns and villages, and the schools serving as distributing points in every county in the Union. It would add

immensely to the value and effectiveness of our systems of public education. All the buildings needed could be erected for from seventy-five million to one hundred million dollars. Probably thirty millions a year would be ample for up-keep. What are these amounts to the people of the United States? A hundred million dollars would pay our army and navy bills for something like four months; it would pay our pension bill for seven months; and other bills not so important as these it would pay for a whole month. It is not so much a question of means as it is a question of whether or not we will undertake it with determination to carry it through.

If we should undertake this, the cost might be reduced and the effectiveness of the libraries increased by supplementing the county libraries of a state with a state library, in which should be kept, in sets of from five to twenty, costly books on special subjects which might be called for occasionally at any library, but which the county libraries could not afford to own. These collections in the state libraries would supplement the collections in the county libraries, any one of which might order any of these books from the state library at any time. The parcel-post service, extended so as to include the transportation of books, would thus bring the larger state libraries with their collections of these less-used books to every county, every city, and finally to the doors of every citizen of every county.

I should like to know if you approve this plan, and to believe, as I do, that if you approve, you, the librarians of the country, the teachers and school officers, and we, the members of the United States Bureau of Education, may soon begin working heartily and continue persistently at this task until it is done. We must within this generation bring the benefits of the well-equipped, well-managed library to all the people, regardless of conditions and place of residence.

THIRD GENERAL SESSION

(Wednesday evening, May 27,
Continental Memorial Hall)

President ANDERSON: The first thing on the program for this evening is business. Is there any business to come before the Association before we proceed with the program?

Miss AHERN: There has been much discussion concerning some of the provisions of the present constitution, which do not meet the approval of many members of the Association. Believing that a full and free discussion of those things by those with power to act is better than side discussions on the part of those unwilling to take parliamentary action, I wish to record my desire to make certain changes in Section 14 of the constitution for the following reasons:

The Council as at present constituted is not a deliberative body for the reason that the membership is too large. To be a deliberative body it ought to have some permanency of membership, and at the same time be small enough to concentrate on the work in hand so that it may represent the consensus of opinion of the entire Council instead of a committee of that body. The ex-presidents would render a sufficiently large number of permanent members. These, with the Executive Board and the representatives of the affiliated associations, would seem to be a better number than the present.

Referring to Section 22: We hear on all sides that there are too many meetings and in too many libraries the same people represent their libraries at every meeting, both large and small. A remedy that would be somewhat helpful would be to change Section 22, which provides for an annual meeting of the A. L. A., to a provision for a biennial meeting of the Association.

The question of membership privileges and advantages is obscured by the present wording of Section 3A of the by-laws, which says:

"The privileges and advantages of the A. L. A. conferences shall be available only to those holding personal membership or representing institutional membership in the Association or to members of other affiliated societies."

Does membership in an affiliated society, paying perhaps 10c a member, cover membership in the A. L. A. for such members of the affiliated society, or is it necessary also to pay annual dues in addition to the dues for affiliation? In other words, what constitutes privileges and advantages of the A. L. A. conferences? The answer is not plain as the by-law now reads.

The Association ought not to be prevented either by precedent or personal feeling from securing officers for the Association whose service at the time would be to the advantage of the Association and the advancement of the library cause. The constitution provides that vacancies in the Executive Board shall be filled by appointment of the Executive Board. It is possible, if it has not actually happened, that the majority of the membership of the Executive Board might be appointed by itself.

For these two primary reasons, and for others which might be mentioned, I would suggest that a by-law be passed, providing that one already a member of the Executive Board, either by election or by appointment, shall be ineligible to fill another position by appointment or election in the Executive Board. In other words, that at least a year shall intervene between times of holding office of all elected officers, as is the case now with members of the Council.

Therefore, Mr. President, I move that a committee of five be appointed by the Executive Board to consider the advisability of making such changes as may seem advisable and to report these changes at the first meeting of the Council in the coming year.

Mr. GARDNER M. JONES: I second the motion. I do not agree to all the changes Miss Ahern has suggested, but I think there is a feeling existing among

many members on some of these points, and perhaps others ought to be changed.

President ANDERSON: Are there any further remarks on Miss Ahern's motion? You understand her motion merely calls for the appointment by the incoming Executive Board of a committee of five to consider these questions and report to the Council at its mid-winter meeting.

There being no further discussion, the president put the motion and it was carried.

President ANDERSON: Some three years ago the son of S. Hastings Grant, secretary of the library conference which was held in 1853, presented to this Association a lot of documents which he had found among his father's papers pertaining to that first meeting of librarians in this country, of which Charles C. Jewett, at that time the librarian of the Smithsonian Institution, was president and Mr. S. Hastings Grant, of the New York mercantile library, was secretary.

The son, Mr. Arthur Hastings Grant, who is with us this evening, wishes to present to the Association the original roster of the members in attendance at that meeting. The documents which he presented to us before are carefully mounted and bound in a scrapbook kept at the headquarters at Chicago, and this is to go with them. I take pleasure in introducing Mr. Grant.

Mr. GRANT: Mr. President, and ladies and gentlemen of the American Library Association: I do not know that all of you realize that the 1853 convention was the first official meeting of librarians that was ever held in the world, and is therefore the father of this gathering and of the gatherings of this Association that have preceded it. When my sister and I presented to the Association the correspondence and other papers of my father relating to the calling of this first meeting, the members of which were drawn from the United States all the way from Maine to New Orleans and from this city to St. Louis, we thought that we had given all there was of interest. But the other

day we discovered that what we had taken to be merely a blank book was in reality the authentic record book of the attendance of that first convention, the men having signed as they arrived in the hall, indicating the libraries they represented and, in many cases, the hotel at which they were stopping. Therefore, you see before you the actual record of the members of that first convention of librarians, of which this gathering is a descendant.

Mr. President, on behalf of my sister and myself, I desire to present to this Association this document. (Mr. Grant hands the book to the president.)

President ANDERSON: I need hardly say to Mr. Grant that I feel that I am authorized by you to accept this with our grateful thanks. It will be preserved in the archives of the Association at its headquarters in Chicago.

President ANDERSON: I have asked the First Vice-President of the Association, Mr. Hiller C. Wellman, of Springfield, Massachusetts, to preside over this meeting, and he has very kindly consented. It gives me very great pleasure to turn over the gavel to Mr. Wellman, who will now have the responsibility of this session on his shoulders.

(First Vice-President Wellman takes the chair.)

Vice-President WELLMAN: So rapid has been the progress of the library movement in recent years that I have heard some unkind critics say that librarians were content to be moving without always knowing whither. I will not undertake to say whether there is any truth in that contention, but I want to reassure you. If there is any basis for such a grievous charge, it will be removed tonight; for we are to have the pleasure of listening to a paper on "The present trend" by a keen observer as well as an active participant, Mr. CHARLES KNOWLES BOLTON, librarian of the Boston Athenaeum.

THE PRESENT TREND

Sometimes a seer who looks down the corridors of time into the future finds that he is merely looking at a mirror and is seeing the path he himself has trod; and, after all, perhaps we all have to look at past history in order to get some conception of what the future may bring. Now, the path that we have trod covers, I should say roughly, about seventy years, from the date when George Ticknor, scholar and aristocrat, sounded, as the politicians say, the keynote of our present public libraries campaign. As you may remember, he said that his ideal of the public library was not only to have books for culture, but also books for pleasant reading in time of leisure; and this conception of the public library, that it should contain popular literature for use at the right time, was so revolutionary that it threatened to break up the Boston public library. It seems to me that out of George Ticknor's letters, written in 1849, the public library movement in its present aspect has grown. It seems to me, also, that those seventy years have largely been years of preparation, although in that time there have been some choice souls with the missionary spirit. We have developed classifications; we have developed catalogs. You and I, who know something of the work in England and other countries, realize that this has really been a great achievement. We realize that it has been a very serious and real preparation—nevertheless it has been a preparation, just as we say the training of the child is a preparation for more serious things.

I wish we could see whither we are drifting and to what this preparation is going to lead. Perhaps we are sometimes a little too anxious to know what the future will bring, and I do not know whether we are going to be contented to go slowly on our present way. Coöperation has been one of our watchwords. We talk a great deal about issuing cards by the Library of Congress, about the work the library